



## Office of Mayor Jerry Sanders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### FACT SHEET

## **MAYOR SANDERS AND COUNCILMEMBER ATKINS ANNOUNCE NATIONAL “SMART GROWTH” AWARD FOR CITY HEIGHTS METRO VILLAS/METRO CAREER CENTER PROJECT**

*JOB TRAINING CENTER AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMPLEX  
FUNDED IN PART BY THREE CITY AGENCIES*

Mayor Jerry Sanders and Third District Councilmember Toni Atkins are proud to announce that the Metro Villas/Metro Career Center, the gateway to City Heights, has been selected as a national model for smart planning by the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO).

*The Metro project won a NAHRO Award of Merit, which puts Metro Villas/Metro Career Center in the running for the organization’s National Award of Excellence, to be announced at NAHRO’s upcoming summer conference. The project was funded, in part, by three City of San Diego agencies—the Redevelopment Agency, Centre City Development Corporation and the San Diego Housing Commission.*

The newly constructed mixed-use development is considered a model for “smart growth” on a number of levels:

- Provides “workforce” affordable housing with job training, career counseling and education opportunities;
- Offers community services;
- Located near jobs, public transit, parks, schools, and shopping;
- Greatly improved its surroundings by replacing aging properties with an attractive, dynamic multi-use community facility.

### **Background:**

The City Heights Metro Center Project transformed a once blighted property into a dynamic, mixed-use development that provides multiple benefits for the surrounding neighborhood and the entire San Diego region. The **\$47 million** project includes both office and housing components, the Metro Career Center and Metro Villas, respectively. The attractive four-story office building and 120 new affordable family housing units feature ample structured parking and landscaped open space areas.

### **Project Elements:**

The Metro Center Project's 4.8-acre site features the following amenities:

- An 81, 500 square-foot Metro Career Center offers job seekers and employers a comprehensive menu of job preparation and referral services. In addition, the Center features retail space, a community meeting room and classrooms
- 120 rental housing units with two site manager units and 118 affordable housing units for very low and low-income residents (48 one-bedroom, 36 two-bedroom, 24 three-bedroom, and 12 four-bedroom units)
- A residential commons building, two playground areas ("tot lots") and landscaped open space
- Nearly 500 off-street parking spaces
- Public schools and Teralta Park immediately adjacent to public transit transfer node centers
- On-site special services for residents including a homework center, job training and social services.

### **Location:**

The Metro Center Project is strategically located in the City Heights Redevelopment Project Area at the intersection of University Avenue and State Route 15 freeway. At this intersection expanded decks with decorative transit plazas serve multiple bus routes connecting the site with express service to Downtown, Mission Valley and several job centers in the San Diego region. The four-acre Teralta Park spans over the freeway immediately adjacent to the Metro Center site. Additionally, the Metro Center is located within one-quarter mile of three elementary schools, one middle school, a YMCA and additional parks.

### **Project Partners:**

A coalition of public and private agencies formed to plan, develop and operate the Metro Center Project:

The City of San Diego Redevelopment Agency assisted with funding, land acquisition, public improvements, permit expediting and technical assistance. Development partners include:

- San Diego Revitalization Corporation (the development arm of Price Charities) for the Metro Career Center,
- City Heights Community Development Corporation
- San Diego Interfaith Housing Foundation for the Metro Villas
- San Diego Workforce Partnership leases and operates the entire office building.
- San Diego Housing Commission
- Centre City Development Corporation (CCDC).

### **Funding:**

#### *Metro Career Center*

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|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| San Diego Revitalization Corporation | \$20,588,000 |
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#### *Metro Villas*

|                                     |                  |
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| Agency (CCDC)                       | \$2,000,000      |
| Redevelopment Agency (City Heights) | \$2,600,000      |
| San Diego Housing Commission        | \$1,000,000      |
| FHL Bank Affordable Housing Program | \$960,000        |
| Private Lenders                     | \$3,710,000      |
| Tax Credits                         | \$15,800,000     |
| Deferred Developers Fees            | <u>\$300,000</u> |
| TOTAL                               | \$26,370,000     |

### **Project Timeline:**

- July 2002 - Development Agreements and Commission/Agency funding approved
- September 2002 - Tax Credits awarded
- February 2003 - Construction began
- April 2004 - Completion of Metro Career Center
- December 2004 – Completion of Metro Villas

The City of San Diego's Redevelopment Agency, Centre City Development Corporation and San Diego Housing Commission have worked together to create nearly 36,000 housing units in the City (over 22,000 with rent restrictions) ranging from newly constructed units to homes purchased by first-time buyers.

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